

[Occupational Lore]

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BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS - OCCUPATIONAL LORE

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Project worker William C. Haight

Project editor

Remarks [CC?] Occupational Lore

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Form A

Circumstances of Interview

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

OREGON FOLKLORE STUDIES

Name of worker William C. Haight Date February 24, 1939

Address 1225 S. W. Alder Street, Portland, Oregon

Subject Occupational Lore.

Name and address of informant Charles Imus, 1624 S.W. 16th Street, Portland, Oregon

Date and time of interview 1624 S. W. 16th Street, Portland, Oregon.

Place of interview

Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant

Joseph McLaughlin, Project office.

Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you

Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Mr. Imus' home is in a low-income district, located at the end of an alley. The house is an unpainted, weather-beaten, two-story building. Steps rise from the ground to a porch on the second floor; leading to an apartment.

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His front porch is underneath these steps. A rickety door opens to a second flight of dark, unkempt, dirty steps. At the top of these steps a door opens into a long, musty smelling, ill-lighted hallway.

The hallway widens into a kitchen used by the informant and wife. The interview was conducted in a small, unclean living room. Old chairs, and tables filled the small room. A radio many years old stood under an unwashed window.

An incongruity in this obvious setting of poverty were many fine pieces of china and glassware. These, presumably, a hold-over from the more abundant life!

Form B

Personal History of Informant

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

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Information obtained should supply the following facts:

1. Ancestry

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2. Place and date of birth
3. Family
4. Places lived in, with dates
5. Education, with dates
6. Occupations and accomplishments with dates
7. Special skills and interests
8. Community and religious activities
9. Description of informant
10. Other points gained in interview

1. English and Irish.

2. Roxberry, Kansas, June 11, 1879.

3. Wife.

4. Roxberry, Kansas, 1879 to 1889. Portland, Oregon, 1900 to 1939. Kalama, Washington, 1889 to 1900.

5. "Ain't had none." Wife: "You have too Charley, now tell him what he wants." Charley: "Well, maybe a little grammar school. I can write purty good." Wife: "Yes, Charley, a real pretty hand you write." Charley: "I learned a little as I went along."

6. Farm worker, logger, livery stably keeper, dance hall manager, "jack-of-all-trades."

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7. Cribbage, and playing wind instruments. 2 8. None.

9. Light blue eyes shaded by light eyebrows accentuate the informant's smooth features. His face is expressive; the movements of his eyebrows punctuate his speech. A faded, ragged, brown tie, against a once bright green shirt supplied a concession and mark of distinction to the occasion. His suit was a peculiar color of blue, nearly green. He wore light brown shoes and dark socks that were held up by large safety pins.

Form C

Extra Comment

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

OREGON FOLKLORE STUDIES

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Address 1225 S. W. Alder Street, Portland, Oregon.

Subject Occupational Lore.

Name and address of informant Charles Imus, S.W. 16th Street, Portland, Oregon.

Text:

Well, feller, I hope this comin' up here at night don't discommode you none. Shucks! Joe told me you wuz a-comin' and for me to give you all I got. I'll be dingbusted if I know what you want but you just shoot the questions at me and I'll be a answerin' 'em as well as I can.

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I betcha you have a hard time a gettin' the truth out of people. The truth was better in older times. Yes sir, seems as how people nowadays hear a story and they tell it from the angle that appeals to them. By the time that story has been told by three or four different people it ain't one dingblasted bit like it wuz.

Somethin' that might interest you is the re-union that my family had not so long ago. It was all written up in the papers. I got over 3000 relatives all a-livin'. I never in my life seen so many bloody bloomin' people as we had that there meetin'. Telegrams from all over the United States came to us that day. It seems that anybody by the name of Imus is a relation. Kinda funny.

I think the most important thing that happened to me when I wuz a kid wuz a-readin' Peck's Bad Boy. I read that book until pa caught me 2 a-readin' it sad lambasted the devil out of me for readin' trash. Well, just to get even, I tried some of them tricks that Peck used. Pa just lambasted me all the harder. I learned mighty quick it tweren't no use a buckin' the old man. When he had his say it was up to me to say, 'Yes, sir', quick like, and be a-doin' what he wanted.

You've heard of bull doggin', ain't ya? Well, us kids [rompin?'] around on the farm used to get hard up for somethin' to do. You know there ain't much for a kid to do on a farm. When time was a-hangin' heavy we'd round up all of them bloody dumb oxen in a corner of the field. Ever one of us kids would jackknife off a switch to tickle their flanks with, and then we would back up quite a ways so we could get a run, to jump on the critter's backs. We would run up behind the bloody devils and leap from the ground to their backs. Always us kids would spraddle our legs in mid-air and one hand would slap their rears to help boost us on.

Well, soon's we'd hit their backs, them ignorant critters would let a rip-snortin' beller out of 'em, and run like a scairt rabbit for the barn. You take several kids, put 'em on oxen, and have the oxen and kids a-yellin' and holler'n, beller'n, you really got some noise.

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There wuz a little hill near the barn them dumb critters allus went down. Sure as they went a-buckin' and beller'n down that hill they'd pile us up. Kids can figger out ways to keep on if they figger they're havin' some fun. We figgered if we held onto their tails whilst we wuz a-goin' down that hill they wouldn't pile us. I'll be dingblasted if it didn't work— er-well for a while.

How them old oxen used to beller a-runnin' like hell for the barn. Sure funny. This idea worked for a while but them dumb ignorant 3 (I allus thought them the dumbest animals God ever made) creatures got to runnin' to a small clump of trees and scrapin' us kids off. You'd never think them dumb critters could a-thought of that.

Sometimes we'd ride mules. They're almost as ornery a critter as an oxen. One thing about the stubborn little devils which distinguished them from the oxen wuz the way they could figger out, how to avoid movin'. A mule can figger a 101 ways on how not to move. When you least expect it they will start out and go like hell.

So, you want to know somethin' about loggin'? I don't know much about it. The first bit of loggin' done around my parts— Kalama (Washington)—was done by hand. A crew of fellers; buckers, swamper, knotters, barkers, snipers—the usual bunch of guys needed to got the round stuff out, with axes, saws, jackscrews, and grab hooks would go out in the woods and go to work. Allus they worked close to the river so's we could chute them logs down without no trouble of no kind.

Not much to tell about those loggin' days, just bullin' her through with plenty of sweatin' and swearin'. The first real loggin' operations started when they begin using oxen to drag the logs out from the woods, to the chutes. That way we could work further in from the river, makin' the operations larger.

Those dingblasted ornery, ignorant, oxen would make top cussers out of all bull punchers. The bull punchers would've quit if the foreman had tried to stop 'em from cussing.

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We'd get three, four, maybe six or eight oxen, dog them together to haul the round stuff to the river. Slow? Jesus Christ! Those goddam, ignorant critters would take an hour to move a mile. They were good pullers 4 through. You know, them ornery, bloody critters would take their own time to get started. Cuss 'em, beat 'em, but by God, they wouldn't move until they had wiggled around under their yoke and got it to fittin' their shoulders.

Then, those devils would start pullin'. I mean pullin' too, a horse a-long side of oxen would look like a cream puff in a pullin' match. The bloody devils in bad weather would get mired down and we would have one hell of a time to make 'em move. Bad weather allus made loggin' lots harder. It rains so much in these here parts that the ground gets soggy and won't take much of a load. Logs are purty heavy stuff to be a-pullin' over soggy ground. To make it easier for the oxen we would put little poles underneath the logs so they would roll along over the ground. In bad weather, the weight of the logs would sink the poles and the logs would got stuck in the mire. Then the bull puncher could really fill the woods with some first-class cussin'. Only miners and loggers know how to swear!

A difficulty in using oxen was the fact you always had to clear the windfall trees, and such, for the trail to the chute. You wasted a lot of good loggin' time just for a-shapin' things up to log. Them dumb critters couldn't pull a log over a stump or tree like the donkeys we used later in the game. All this hardship in gettin' the logs out, and the expense of keepin' all them animals and people kinda put a few crimps into loggin'. Soon as the donkey came in loggin' business really picked up a bit.

Old Joe Gill was the first loggin' man to put a steam donkey in our neck of the woods. I remember there was only one mill around where I 5 wuz on the Kowemen river. Soon's the donkey came in I counted 19 loggin' camps in the radius of 21 miles.

The steam donkey sure made a difference in loggin'. Shucks! A day's haulin' with them oxen amounted to nothin' after we got used to workin' the donkeys. We could high league lead it - m-h-m - I'd say, 2100 feet in the woods with the donkey. Quite a difference.

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The donkey could sure pull 'em out. We could dog several logs together, run our drag line up in a tree and start a-goin. Windfalls made no difference to the donkey. She made her own trail as she drug the dogged logs a-long. Sometimes the drag line would lift those logs way up in the air. It would always top a number of trees. When we was runnin' the ground straight the donkey and drag line would lift those logs just a little ways off the ground. When I was a young feller, I used to go out on log and shingle bolt runs in the early spring and fall after puttin' my time in a-loggin'.

Know anything about a shingle bolt drive? Well, I didn't think you would. Not many people do.

Along the river banks after the heavy log drivers have been made you find logs about 4 feet long. However, there ain't no restriction on the size. Those logs have been broken up by hittin' rocks in the river, and the log jams have squeezed them up in the river banks. Come the high water and 'tis boltin' time. With high water it wuz easy to roll the logs into the river.

To push the bolts into the river we would use peavy's, jack-screws, and sometimes we'd just pack 'em. It took a lot of nerve on a cold morning to walk into the icy water and get those bolts to runnin'. If a feller 6 didn't get all wet right away, why, it was a disgrace. He'd either jump in or somebody would trip him and he'd fall in. Funny, I'm the only one left out of my bolt runnin' crew. Husky, big fellers, you know, but that workin' in cold, wet clothes all day got 'em all but me. Lucky, I guess.

You know I went out of a loggin' camp onto a street car and I ain't been worth a penny since.

Yee-up—I used to drive a stage-coach. The owner of the stagecoach I had to drive had a contract calling for the run from North Yamhill to Tillamock. My run was from Perkins Mill, which me and the old lady run, to Trask. Perkins Mill was kinda like a hotel. The old lady

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would do the work around there, and I'd drive the coach. Course, I'd help her quite a-bit, particularly if I wasn't busy.

My drive was 16 miles. Took us about two and half hours in good weather. The first ten miles was on level ground and we could hoop-er-up. The next six miles were straight up the hill. I mean straight up, too. You know, in the olden days we allus followed the Indian trails. They built their trail on the highest ground they could find. Allus the trail would lead to a point where you could see the whole country. Their idea behind this wuz on high points they could smoke signal the news of the day to other Indians. Nowadays, the people build their roads up the draw. Easier goin', make better time. Heh! Heh! We can get our news now so fast it'd make a smoke signaler bow his head in shame.

When those old Indian trails got too tough to travel we'd make our own roads. The feller that had the contract bought the toll road we traveled from a feller. His contract for runnin' the mail was about up, so's he wouldn't put no work in on the road. Sure made it lots tougher on us coachmen.

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There were three of us coachmen that did the runnin'. Shucks! We could skin them horses through in no time atall. Of course, that wuz providin' there wuz good weather.

A feller called Billy, somethin'-er-other, was the beat stagecoach driver I ever did see. By gum, he could turn a four or six - horse team around as easy as pie, on a sawdust ring. The sawdust rings was where we fellers used to exercise the horses and practice fancy driving. Old Billy woulda made a good tallyho driver. That feller could take a six - horse team and drive a stake with his rear wheel. That's really placin' the horses where you want 'em to go.

The coach we used was a tharough brace coach - the hardest ridin' coach man ever made. Most coaches were springed up and they would rock sort of from side to side. The tharough brace's motion wuz a forward and backward one. It made it awful hard ridin'. Too,

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when you hit a good bump like as not you'd bite a kidney. Sometimes you'd slip and fall into the boot. Damme, but that would hurt!

The thorough- brace stage-coach was a much harder drivin' coach. Many times we would have to strap the passengers and ourselves in good and tight to stick with the durn wagons.

When the roads started getting bad, wuz when our real trouble started. The thorough-brace coach would give way to a democrat and four horses. A democrat is a skeleton wagon that has a bottom bed and wire rack for a side. A feller could easily lift one end of a democrat with one hand. Even so, the snow and slush would got too much for the horses to pull a light wagon like a democrat. Then the democrat would go into the barn and we'd have to pack the mail through. Passengers would ride a horse.

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About thirty or forty years ago - I don't recollect dates well - there wuz a terrible snowstorm. I seen somethin' then I ain't seen since. It's a God's fact too, but most people won't believe it. The snow was so high when we packed the horses through we blazed a trail on trees. Come spring and that there trail we blazed was 20 or 30 feet off the ground. Snow sure got deep.

The following summer people comin' through on the stage-coach would look an see them marks high on the trees. They'd allus ask us what they were. When we told them they'd say, "You damn liars," but 'twas a God's fact.

The mail had to get through despite the weather. Durin' this bad storm we were havin' one hell of a time. The old postmaster was a cantankerous soul and even if he could see us comin', if we were overdue, he'd lock up and wouldn't take the mail. Everytime this happened the boss would get fined \$100, for not fulfillin' his contract.

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The snow kept pilin' up until we couldn't got through atall. The inspector, from the Portland office came out to see what wuz the matter. He said they figgered in the office we were shirkin' our duty. Well, that feller was kind of fat which made it bad for him when he told us he would show we fellers how to bulldog her through. No snow could stop him. We started out from the office with a loaded pack train. Up that mountain we tried to go.

That poor inspector cussed, drove, pounded them horses and yelled at us until we wuz well nigh exhausted. He finally quit when he fell off of his horse into a large snowbank. He durn near strangled to death in that drift. My boss pulled him out. The inspector said then we might as 9 well go back, nobody could get through. We'd figgered that all along but them city fellers didn't understand and we kinda thought "well, maybe he can got us through, we ain't too old to learn a few new tricks." It was sure comical watchin' that inspector flounderin' in the snowdrift. After rasselin' around in the snow drifts all day he was mighty glad to get back to the mill.

Old man Shillings used to ride our stages. He was quite a character in them days. A good old scout but he had peculiar ideas. He allus called ahead to the old lady to tell her what he wanted for dinner. The same menu every time. Hot biscuits, mashed potatoes, milk gravy, meat, and lemon pie.

One time when he come through we had a young boy hangin' around whose hair was fixed in long curls. Old man Shillings was a sittin' at a special table. (bein' a little out of the ordinary he allus got the special table), and when he saw this kid come through the room, thinkin' he was a girl, he called, "Hey, little girl come here."

Well, that boy did mind a lot a bein' called a girl. I'll be dingbusted if he didn't up and wham the old man a good one. It tickled the old man so much he apologized and gave the kid a dollar. Allus he paid the old lady \$2.50 for his meal, which was a lot of money for one dinner.

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A lady ridin' through on the stages one time got scairt at the hairpin curves. Finally, she said she wanted to sit up with the driver so's she could jump if the wagon went over the grade. To pacify her they let her sit up with the driver. We were shufflin' along pretty lively when all of a sudden the lady got scairt and grabbed the lines away from the driver. I swear to goodness if the driver hadn't been a humdinger stage hand he would have piled the coach up. Those horses jack-knifed and nearly threw the coach over.

During the excitement the lady slipped off the seat and fell into the boot. After everybody cooled off they decided to strap the lady in the wagon. They strapped her in, all right, with her a hollerin' and screamin' bloody murder. She screamed that she was a-goin' to sue the company; then I'll be dingblasted if she didn't tear off a string of cuss words that would make a bull puncher blush with shame. Women are funny, sometimes.

Say young feller, I just happened to think that at the time of the big & now which held us blocked for 28 days, my pardner and me ski-ed supplies into bar-bound Tillamock. We heard the town was out of supplies. You see, they were not only bar-bound but snow-bound too. Don't happen very often.

It took us three days to pack the stuff into them. Those poor horses we were packin' were played out when we got to Tillamock. The people were mighty glad to see the pack train get over the mountains into the town. It wuz worth all the sweatin' and swearin' we had to go through to get the food to them.

There were many trapper's cabins scattered through the hills we used to drive over. Trappers in that district built shacks near creeks. They would look around and find a place where the windfall was right and start building.

The shacks, not much more than lean-tos, were made from small poles, rigged together just like a log cabin. The sides were banked high with evergreen boughs to keep the wind from howlin' through. Furniture was all made by hand. The trappers would rig up

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a bench, a table, and build a bunk. The tables and benches were built without nails. To make the legs stay on they would carve a hole in the top, flat part and then run the leg up through this hole. It made the benches a little uncomfortable if they didn't take the end off of the legs that were stickin' through.

Allus they would leave blankets, utensils, food stuff, and most often a gun. This was done so's if anybody was lost they could use the cabin. The guns were left there, with stuff to clean them with, and bullets, for the wanderer to get his meat. Kinda funny, none of that stuff was ever taken. Sure would have been too bad for the guy that tried to take it. Nowadays, a set-up like that wouldn't last a week.

The ghost story I experienced didn't amount to very much. I'm tellin' ya' though, it sure kept the young folks home for a while.

I'd been hearin' about the ghost in the cemetery behind the Methodist Church for sometime. Pa had allus told us kids there wasn't no such thing as a ghost. But mighty reputable people whose words wuz good as gold had seen this ghost. There wuz some kind of a doin's in town that I attended one night, and on the / way home I decided to see about this here ghost everybody was a-doin' so much jawin' about.

Just before I got to the church I let my horse walk real slow. I figgered I might need him to travel fast and I wanted to be ready to go if that ghost came after me. It wuz a nice moonlight night, I guess that is what gave me the courage to go and find the ghost. I stopped my horse down the hill aways from the cemetery, so's I could see this 12 ghost. I figgered I'd be safe there, the ghost had never come down as far as I wuz. Well, by golly, I saw it! It seemed like he would raise up from the tombstones and then go down. Just up and down. I tell ya, I ain't braggin' when I say I finally screwed up enough courage to go up and see the ghost, I wuz plain scairt all the time.

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It seemed like to me it took that old horse of mine forever to walk the distance to the graveyard. What do you think I saw when I got there? Well, I'll be dingblasted if it wuzn't a neighbor's ornery old gray horse.

Ya' see, this graveyard was on kinda of a ledge and all's we could see of that horse was his head, goin' up and down; down to grab some grass and up to chew it. There weren't no more ghost stories around them parts after that.

Are ya' religious? If you are I won't tell the story. All right. I ain't got nothin' against Catholics, I don't figger you can blame 'em for bein' Catholics. I don't understand much about what they're aimin' for, and I don't like much the way they aim for whatever they're aimin' for. This old man Donovan I'm goin' to tell ya about was a Catholic. Because he wuz a Catholic it resulted in makin' most of his life mighty miserable, aside from makin' him awful dingblasted mad.

Old man Donovan had two kids, Harry and Joe. Joe and me would fight every day I went to school; mainly, what I went to school for, I reckon. One day I went to school and Joe wasn't there. Right away, I figgered somethin' pretty important musta happened or else Joe'd be there.

Sure 'nuff! Later in the day we heard old man Donovan had died. Soon's the teacher heard that the old feller was gone she dismissed school.

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Seems like they sort of needed some people to help around up at Donovan's, so the teacher asked my side-kick Bill, and me to go up there. Seein' as how my old man loaned the widow the money to send for the priest to come and pray Donovan out of Purgatory, I guess the teacher thought I'd be a good one to send.

The priest did his job all right. They laid Donovan out on a board that was supported by two chairs, threw a sheet over him and put the candles at his head and feet. After the

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priest left Bill and me were delegated to sit in the kitchen and watch the corpse, which wuz in an adjoining room. In the other room the widow and every Irishman and German within forty miles was a-holdin' the wake. Plenty of good liquor they were drinkin'. I remember of seein' two demijohns sittin' on the table when somebody opened the door. The house wuz on a hill and built out of shakes. The wind could sure make a howl when it tore into those shakes. The mind, coupled with the wailing of the wakers, made it sort of eerie settin' in the kitchen.

Bill wuz plenty scairt anyhow. This wuz the first time he'd ever been around a corpse. All of a sudden Bill and me heard the doggondest sound I'd ever heard. I decided the cat must have got into the corpse someway. God! I thought that wuz terrible. Here those people wuz dependin' on Bill and me to guard the corpse, and we'd let the cat into the body. I told Bill to pick up the metal-plated lamp and follow me.

We went in there and could see the sheet goin' up and down, up and down, with the most peculiar noise I ever heard a-comin' out of that corpse. Bill was a shakin' so that lamp sounded like a rattle. Bill takes a good look and says, "By God, I'm gettin' out of here." He shoves the lamp in my hand and runs like a scairt nigger for home.

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I goes over and lifts up the sheet. By that time some of the wakers heard the noise and come in to see what it wuz all about. By golly, old Donovan was alive! They picked him up, put warm blankets, and hot water bottles around him. He got well and lived for 17 years.

Funny part about it wuz the fact that the priest wouldn't let him or his family go to church no more. The priest said he was a sinner and God had refused to take him, so he had to come back to earth. Anyway, he'd been prayed our of purgatory and there wuzn't anything could be done about it. Old man Donovan was the maddest man you ever saw. Poor bugger, he wuzn't no more of a sinner than anybody else. He died when he stepped in front of a freight train 17 years after this all happened.

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Medicine Cure:

Disease, Flu:

Mix one pound of white rock candy one quart of rye whiskey.

Mix the ingredients until they have a consistency of syrup.

Take a glassful, (small) twice a day.

Odd Nick Names of the Quick family:

Gilbert.....Ebby

Charley.....Mich

Mamie.....Toots (long o sound).

Alice.....Snid

Bill.....Dicker

Albert.....Snicker

15

One time when I was working in a lumber camp a young swede came to work. Bein' purty young and not knowin' very much he was plenty cocky. The bull puncher got a little tired of the young 'uns blowin' so he figgered he'd fix him up.

Ya' know a lot of people don't know the difference between a cant hook and a peavy. The bull puncher figgerin' this young swede bein' a little dumb about things around the camp wouldn't know the difference. So the bull puncher sent the young 'un after the cant hook.

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Sure nuff! The swede brought back a peavy. By ding! That bull puncher gave that young feller the finest piece of cussin' I ever heard one man give another. He started in on his ancestors and ended up with a Jim dandy of a finish. I reckon I'd better not tell ya' what he said you couldn't print it. (The interviewer agrees it couldn't be printed)

The young feller took it all in, never said a word. When the bull puncher finished he just said, "Well, I'll get one if it takes all day."

He kinda took the sting and fun outa the cussin' by bein' so nice about it. It tweren't a case of bein' yellow—leastwise he didn't look scared a bit. I guess he was bound and determined to make good and no cussin' was gonna stop him.

Long toward evenin' I begin to get a little worried about the kid. I'd felt kinda sorry for him, and it was a cinch he was gonna be fired a-spendin' a whole day lookin' fer a damn cant hook.

Just before quittin' time the feller wanders in with a damn old mewly lookin' caw. "Fer God sakes," yelled the bull puncher, "whatcha doin' with that old cow?"

The young fellow with a real sober look said, "you wanted a cant hook, and this is the only thing I can find that can't hook."

After that the feller got along fine.

16

Story of a Presentiment

My brother Al, had this presentiment. He knowed the truth of this here murder afore he got a confession—I reckon why the story left such a heavy impression on me, because Al was district attorney. He allus dabbled a little in politics. Too, Al was in some danger, but

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the main thing was he had a presentiment and when Al had a presentiment ya' could purty near figger it bein' right.

There was an old man, his name is not clear in my mind that had a timber claim near home. I knowed the old duffer well. He was purty sociable and mighty well liked by everybody in the community.

After timber started gettin' to be a little scarce, people from the outside started comin' in and takin' up claims. There was a young feller and his wife that came into the country and took up a claim next to the old duffer. I ain't sure whether their claims joined or there was a forty between, anyway they were purty close together.

This here young feller didn't know nothin' much. He was kinda up against it to get started buildin' a place to live, buildin' fences, and all the other stuff you have to do. The old feller, first, felt kinda sorry for the young kids and started helpin' 'em.

The three of them got to be real pals. This old duffer'd come over every day and help the kids do their work. The young fellers wife'd cook 'em up a big feed and all was goin' well. This situation went on for a year. Pleasant, sociable, three-some.

Lots of times after the day's work, the men folks'd go out and hunt. One day the meat was a-runnin' low, so they decided to go out and get some. The old duffer brought a shot gun over from his place and told the young feller he could use the shot gun and kill some birds, and the old fellow could use the other gun and get a deer.

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A couple of hours later the old man came back out of breath, and real excited. He tells the girl that her husband has accidentally shot himself. My brother bein' district attorney went out with the coroner to look into the case. Al got there, and although everythin' tallied up as far as the story went he figgered somethin' was funny about the situation. This is where Al had his presentiment. And as I told you when he got one it was always purty good.

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The old duffer's story was that he had been walking in the lead. There was a vine maple layin' across the trail they were travelin' and as the young man climbed over this vine the gun got hung up on it some way and was discharged. When the old man heard the shot he turned around and saw the young fellow lying on the ground. By the time he got to him he was dead.

My brother Al took the old duffer into town and locked him up on suspicion. Jesus! The old man sure went on the warpath. He allowed he was goin' to get Al soon's he got out of the can.

Finally, the old fellow confessed. He'd shot the young fellow as he had climbed over the vine. The reason the old fellow shot the young 'un was because the old fool was infatuated with the wife.

By ding, the ornery old cuss, just afore they hanged him decided he was plenty sorry for what he done to those kids. To try and make amends he turns over everythin' he had to the widow. In the stuff he had was a heavy gold watch. The widow wouldn't take none of it. She said she wanted to have nothin' more to do with the old man.

Al figgers the lady needs money so's she can get back home to Kansas so he raffles the old man's watch off. This here raffle brought in quite a bit of money, which the lady took.

Funny part about the whole thing is that when the girl was a-comin' 18 out from her place on horseback, the horse slipped and fell, throwin' her off. She bein' pregnant this made her awful sick. In fact, she died in just a couple of days.

Odd all three were dead in quick order. Nobody gained nothin' by what they did. That's what you get for covetin', I guess. Murder Solved by Flour.

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There was an old couple about a half mile from me that was a whittlin' out a livin' on a turkey farm. It was just before Thanksgiving and they took a load of turkeys into town to sell them.

When they sold all of the turkeys they went around town a payin' their bills and buyin' their winter's grub. After they finished doin' all their buyin' all they had left was two dollars, which they took home with them to save.

Several days later some neighbors found them murdered. The bodies were sittin' in chairs by a table, in between two windows, kinda in the corner. On the table was the remains of a dinner. They had both been shot through the head. A bullet had been shot from outside one window, it entered the old man's head then passed through to the old lady's and went on out the other window. (This is not supposed to be a tall tale).

Detectives from all over the country worked on the case. They couldn't figger out who done it or why. Outside of maybe, somebody thought they had money on hand. All the detectives could find that had been taken was a clock and the two dollars.

The local sheriff had always fancied himself as sorta of a detective. He messed around the place and couldn't find much of a clue. Wanderin' around he found down by the river at the boat landin' a lot of flour. He went into 19 town and found out the old folks had bought up a supply for the winter, but there wasn't any flour at the house.

He figger'd then the murderer had stolen the flour. Followin' this lead he went down the river till he come to a boat landin' where a number of fishermen docked. Sure 'nuff! He found traces of flour at one of the fisherman's docks. He arrested the feller all right. Didn't have no trouble atall a gettin' the goods on him. They found the flour and the clock in the feller's house. The trial was quite excitin'. I never will forget old Judge McCready, the baseball magnate, was presidin'. When he sentenced the feller he stood up straight and

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unconcerned like. I never heard a voice sound so loud and heavy as the old Judge said, "You will hang by the neck until dead — dead — dead." God 'twas awful.

They hung the guy all right. 'Twas when the counties did their own hangin'. Seems like the hangman's knot slipped someway and instead of breakin' his neck it just tore the neck about half off. Blood spurted out of him like a chicken with his head cut off.

Form D

Extra Comment

Federal Writers' Project

Works Progress Administration

OREGON FOLKLORE STUDIES

Name of worker William C. Haight, Date February 24, 1939

Address 1225 S. W. Alder

Subject Occupational Folklore

Name and address of informant Charles Imus, 1624 S. W. 16th Street, Portland, Oregon.

Comment:

The informant in this interview was cooperative to the fullest extent of his ability.

Much of the informant's charm is lost in a recording of this sort. His low chuckle and facial expressions give a delight to his conversation, that the written words lack.